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of the best books on the Holy Land), we shall close this article. "I cannot often enough express," says Professor Ritter, "what an uncommon amount of instruction I owe to this valuable work. It lays open, unquestionably, one of the richest discoveries, one of the most important scientific conquests, which have been made for a long time in the field of Geography and Biblical Archæology. I can at present say this the more decidedly, because, having had opportunity to examine the printed sheets nearly to the end of the second volume, I can better judge of the connexion of the whole, than was before possible. Now I perceive how one part sustains another; and what noble confirmation the truth of the Holy Scriptures receives from so many passages of these investigations, in a manner altogether unexpected and often surprising, even in particulars seemingly the most trivial and unimportant. The accompanying maps too, justify, step by step, the course of the investigations. Thus now first begins, since the days of Reland, the second great epoch of our knowledge of the Promised Land."

ART. IX. — *Notices of the War of 1812*. By JOHN ARMSTRONG, late a General in the Army of the United States, and Secretary of War. New York: George Dearborn. 1836. 1st Vol. pp. 263. Wiley & Putnam. 1840. 2d Vol. pp. 244. 12mo.

WHEN the first volume of these "Notices" was issued in 1836, the public was informed, that the second volume would follow "with all convenient despatch,"—a phrase of most convenient latitude, though probably, in the opinion of that public at least, not warranting the four years which have deferred the fulfilment of its expectations. No title could be more modest and unpretending, than that which has been assumed for this work, none which could authorize a more summary or detached treatment of the subject in hand, as it admits of almost any selection or omission of the various facts presented, and any method of comment upon them. Accordingly, the author has made his work rather a military *critique* than a history, the several prominent campaigns of the war being something like texts for his critical commentaries.

It is said, with much truth, that "the late war"* has not yet been made the subject of history. Many detached accounts have been written of it, which embody materials for the future historian. These "Notices," sententious and unpretending as they are, may perhaps be regarded as the nearest approach to a connected record of the military events of that period, which the public has received. Symptoms, however, have already appeared (on the publication of the first volume), which show that its correctness or fairness is questioned, and even openly impeached. We do not think that a veteran soldier, well versed in the doubts and contradictions that envelope the deeds of war, especially battles, will be surprised at this. He must know, that probably no battle, in which more than a company, or so, has been engaged, has ever been related in precisely the same manner by two witnesses. The difficulties in the way of agreement, in these descriptions, are obvious. Military engagements have much to occupy and confuse the attention. Scarcely any two persons are likely to observe the same occurrences, at least under the same aspects. Nearly every one, excepting the chief in command, has his attention confined to more or less limited portions of the field, and cannot be supposed, under the deep responsibility resting upon him to sustain with all his energy and devotion the distinct part allotted to him, to have cast more than hasty glances at other parts, which could probably be but imperfectly seen even under a more steady examination.

Those who have had some experience in military events, and have been accustomed to reflect on the difficulties here referred to, and the hopeless task of endeavouring to record them, in all their details, with perfect truth, or so as to reconcile the testimony of all spectators, will feel convinced, that little more than the main results of such events will at last be satisfactorily fixed in history. Contemporaneous accounts are ever conflicting, and it is only after they have been taken up with some of the sobermindedness and impartiality of posterity, and brought into a degree of conformity with those results,

* This phrase, "the late war," which was very appropriate many years since, is still much used, — though with less and less propriety, of course, each year, — by the officers engaged in that war, partly from habit, and partly, perhaps, from a faint hope that it will disguise the quarter of a century that has elapsed since it closed.

that the record becomes authoritative, or generally received as determinate. When new generations have sprung up, there is little interest felt in questions as to personal character, or pretensions of rival corps. The strongest appeals may be made for the reversion of what are termed hasty and unwarranted judgments, yet a work of established reputation and wide circulation is likely to prevail as the standard of history, in spite of the supposed errors it may have sanctioned, or the imputed wrongs it may have inflicted.

General Armstrong's qualifications for writing a history of the war of 1812, would appear to be very manifest. He bore an elevated and active part in that war; and had long been recognised as a skilful writer, having given, as is well known, proofs in this respect, early in life, while an officer of the revolutionary army. An apprehension was felt, by many, that his somewhat caustic humor would be likely to infuse too much severity into his accounts. It was notorious, that he had enemies whom he might wish to punish, and he was supposed to have friends, whom he might be well pleased to reward;—feelings which most naturally exercise an unfavorable influence over the strict justice of a writer's decisions. How far the charge of having submitted to influences of this kind lies against the distinguished author of the "Notices," we shall have occasion to remark as we pass them under review. We believe that, when the first volume appeared, it was generally admitted to have been written in a more moderate and liberal spirit than had been anticipated.

From a brief but distinct account of the "causes of the war," the historian proceeds to the condition of the defences of the country at the time when hostilities were undertaken. It would have been well if he could have recorded that we showed as much prudence as we had received provocation. In this respect, there was little to say to our credit. The author of the "Notices" might have justly and properly dwelt with still greater severity on the singular want of this quality, which was exhibited in nearly all our preparations for this war of our own choosing. Had the initiative been taken by our antagonist, many excuses might rise up in our favor. The time, however, was our own choice. It was deferred or hastened at our own option. We are well aware of the often stated unsuitableness of a government, constituted like ours, for warlike preparation. It is not to legislative reluc-

tance or tardiness to act until the hour of extreme necessity arrives, that we here allude. All acknowledge this, and it is in vain to reiterate lamentations over it. We are now regarding only executive agency in such cases. Here are few or none of the clogs that embarrass other departments of the government. The Executive has the power, even under our constitution, to use the means confided to its hands for national defence, with the utmost necessary latitude. The army and navy, whatever may be their force, are at its command. When the war with Great Britain was approaching, and considered unavoidable, were those means prepared, strengthened, and applied to the emergency with due care, forecast, and energy? This is a question which it is proper to ask, and which it is the province of history to answer, for the benefit of posterity.

Our army, at the opening of hostilities, was small, but had been unnecessarily and inexcusably reduced below its legal force, by a relaxation in the recruiting service during the years immediately preceding them. It is a singular fact, that, between 1809 and 1812, within which interval there was scarcely a moment when our foreign relations, particularly with England, were not of a threatening and alarming character, the Secretary of War reported funds, appropriated by Congress for this service, as having been unexpended, while the army lacked many hundreds, not to say thousands, of its proper complement. We had, nevertheless, some few thousands of men who had much efficiency, being well officered, and accustomed to subordination. We had maritime fortifications, and some on the interior frontier,—imperfect and dilapidated, it is true, but capable of defence. As soon as war was declared, the navy went forth in full readiness for battle. So far, the executive arm was fully nerved. But on land, no post, no corps, was awakened to heed by any precautionary orders. The fact, that many of our out-posts were behind antagonist posts in hearing of the declaration of war, is sufficiently mortifying, but should not have lessened the ability of each one to meet the emergency according to its means. It was not necessary that this declaration should be made, in order that every soldier should be on the *qui vive*, that every arm should be put in serviceable order, and that the national defences should be in a condition to meet hostility. There was no necessity that Mackinaw should fall,

because the British first heard the news of war, as there was certainly no reason why the wings of Mercury should have been formed in readiness to waft it on one side only. Months before the outbreak, the commanding officer of that post might have been forewarned of the necessity of vigilance and preparation, and should have had (as in fact he had) no excuse for allowing an armed body of men to approach his post with so little observation, as to knock at his gate before its presence was even suspected. Such an approach, which ought to have been duly seen, was a sufficient proclamation of hostility, at least so far as regarded that post. Resistance, under such circumstances, became justifiable and even imperative, whether a national war existed or not. This remote and important post had been permitted to slumber in fancied security, without any efforts to strengthen its decayed defences, and had only a subaltern in command at the time it was taken. The most common dictates of prudence would have led to some care of these guards on the outer wall, when danger was approaching, and even close at hand. But war seems to have found our army, most of our maritime fortifications, and all our frontier posts, just as many years of peace had left them. They were all nearly, or quite, as unprepared for such an event, as if there had been no reason to apprehend that that peace would soon end. It is of want of preparation in these respects, that we complain,—a want that finds no excuse in any defects of our republican government. Our army, — several thousands strong, as we have before remarked, — might have been in perfect readiness for action, and all our posts could have been well apprized of the necessity of being constantly prepared for defence. A change from the state of peace to that of war, should have been supposed to make no other change in their condition, than that of giving them the authority to act on the offensive. Fitness for defence belonged alike to both conditions.

We attach little importance to the circumstance that General Hull, when advancing to the northwestern frontier, did not receive intelligence of the declaration of war as soon as the British; though we dwell with amazement on the blunders of the arrangement, which, starting off two letters written by the war department to him, on the 18th of June, one communicating information of the declaration of war (declared on that day), and the other silent on that subject, permitted the latter to

reach him on the 24th of that month, and left the former to loiter on the route until the 2d of July. The "Notices" account for this inversion of the rule of speed, by stating that the last letter went by an express or private hand, while the first was abandoned to the ordinary mail facilities, which terminated at Cleveland at that time. Chance, or special instructions, alone provided for any advance beyond that point. The calculations of the War Department doubtless were, that the mail would outstrip the individual. This was probable, but the case would appear to have demanded an arrangement that should have outstripped both these means. The loss of the schooner and its contents, which was consequent on the omission to inform General Hull of the war in the shortest possible time, would have defrayed the extra expense of such despatch many times over.

We think, however, that General Hull was engaged in an expedition that called for nearly all the vigilance and precaution of a state of avowed hostility. He was advancing, at a time when such a state of things was hourly expected, with a strong force, on a point which threatened a weak flank of the *quasi* enemy, and had reason to anticipate a readiness on the part of the British to take advantage of the first hint of a rupture. It was clearly his duty to be prepared for open hostility, and to have incurred no hazard which that state of things would have forbidden. Disincumbering his army, about to take a march through a wilderness of some seventy miles, by embarking his sick in a schooner at the Maumee, was, perhaps, an excusable measure ; but there was no excuse for exposing his returns and confidential papers to any hazards at all. This was a miscalculation that amounted to wanton heedlessness. The capture of those papers no doubt eventually turned the scale of the campaign. Instructions, returns, correspondence, — all that an adroit enemy could wish to acquire, were there thrown into his possession ; proving a want of ordinary foresight, and, it is said, so many other defects of character in his antagonist, as to warrant General Brock, in that hardy, almost fool-hardy, course of operations, with which he shortly afterwards overawed rather than overpowered that antagonist.

The critical remarks with which this first chapter (after a manner that prevails throughout the work) is closed, will probably receive the assent of most military men. They are

based on maxims which are admitted to have weight, and which cannot be violated with impunity. In this opening of the war on the northwestern frontier, the author sees nothing but blunders and disasters, excepting in the affair at Maguaga, which was well fought and successful, the main body of the regulars there having already tried their courage and steadiness at Tippecanoe.

The errors of government, as well as of General Hull, are passed under this critical review. The "Notices" do not repeat the common remark, that the appointment of this general was one of those errors. The author's revolutionary recollections led him to know that General Hull stood high, for his rank, in the opinion of one whose estimation was considered as decisive of merit. The position he held at the time of his appointment in Michigan peculiarly fitted him for the command confided to him. The capital error was, omitting to make any efforts to secure ascendancy on Lake Erie. A little forecast, and a little expense, would have effected this object. Another, and hardly less error was, omitting to occupy the enemy on the Niagara frontier. His force there was liberated by an armistice just in time to become applicable to the northwestern frontier. The first error may not have been so obvious to those who committed it. The last was a blunder that seems to mock all attempts at justification or palliation.

The "Notices" dwell long and somewhat minutely on the disastrous campaign of the northwest. Misfortunes would be dearly bought indeed, if they were not made subservient to the instruction of posterity. The general who has connected his name prominently with them must be content to point the moral. This is the best compensation he can make for his miscalculations or ill luck.

General Hull's surrender, darkened by the like fate of Mackinaw, and the miserable tragedy at Chicago, and scarcely relieved by the gallant but fruitless success at Maguaga, came upon the public like a heavy fog; preparing it, however, for the calamities that followed at the River Raisin. The "Notices" take up the narration of this melancholy sequence to Hull's campaign, with an evident desire to vindicate General Winchester at the expense of higher authority. The anxiety on the part of General Winchester to protect the small settlement on that river was generous, but could have been safely

indulged only by throwing forward a force competent to meet that which was well known to be at Malden. Frenchtown, left to itself, would doubtless have suffered, though the laws of war protect an unresisting people from violence. Ineffectual protection, however, is worse than utter abandonment. The unhappy residents of that place suffered, in the end, tenfold calamity, in consequence of their impotency for protection.

The criticisms of the veteran author on this train of evils have much force and correctness. He exhibits most obviously the errors committed in the arrangements for the second action, which, with better dispositions, might have resulted so differently. We are surprised, however, to see the speech of Colonel Allen inserted; not that the speech itself, as given, is not eloquent, and of a generous spirit. Addresses of this kind, purporting to usher in a military movement, have long since been omitted, as unnecessarily encumbering historic narration. Besides, in this case, the speech contained but few reasons which should have swayed a grave military council. These criticisms, however, as we have before remarked, exhibit throughout a tinge of disfavor towards the General-in-chief on that frontier. The misfortunes of General Winchester are made to hinge on movements of the commanding general, when the commonly received opinion is, that they were produced by a departure from express instructions from that quarter. It was not intended that General Winchester should obtrude himself, in that attenuated form, within reach of the enemy; and when, through an excited or liberal spirit, he resolved to incur hazards not strictly warranted by his instructions, or the rules of war, he became responsible for all the misfortune or disgrace which followed. If at any moment the steps he had taken were sanctioned by his senior, it was doubtless when Colonel Lewis's gallant repulse of the first attempts of the enemy to dislodge him, encouraged a belief that General Proctor was less strong or less enterprising than there had been just reason to expect. Notwithstanding all the kind efforts of the "Notices" to relieve General Winchester from that responsibility which has generally been fixed upon him, by public opinion, as to the River Raisin events, we believe that that opinion will remain the same. It was his act which led to the occupation of this salient point, and it was his disposition of the troops before the second attack by General Proctor, that would

appear to have led to that general's triumph and his own captivity. Nor can his order, or recommendation, — let it assume what name it may, — dictated, as it was, under the threats of his captor, and sent in to the battalion of brave men still defending the stockade, ever be justified upon any military principles, or even any reasons of expediency. His command had ceased, as well as his capacity to judge of what might be expedient or necessary on the part of those, who were then apart from his observation, and as independent of his control as if he had no longer existed. Captivity as effectually forecloses all authority in such cases, as death. He might safely have confided in the judgment of men, who, by their conduct, had shown themselves his superiors in skill, if not in bravery, and must have known that his message, however couched, whether in authoritative or recommendatory language, when sent in under such circumstances, would most naturally have a dispiriting influence over his late comrades, whose straitened condition called for every incentive to daring, even to a desperation of perseverance. The commander, whose want of heed or adroitness has led to his capture, should not increase the evils his ill luck or unskilfulness have drawn upon his command, by taking any steps which may involve others in the same predicament. General Winchester, when he could no longer be instrumental of good, should not have permitted himself to be instrumental of evil, as he undoubtedly did, though from kind motives. But such motives are not to govern under such stern circumstances of war.

The simultaneous retreat of the two belligerents, General Harrison from the Rapids, and General Proctor from the scene of his victory, — exhibiting, as it did, a seeming misapprehension on both sides, — furnishes the veteran author with ground for much severity of comment. No doubt one of the parties, at least, could have safely avoided such a retrograde. But circumstances are not always obvious until it is too late. In the present instances, it was not without reason that both parties came to the conclusion that prudence required a falling back upon stronger ground. General Proctor, notwithstanding his success, had reason to apprehend that his enemy, only a part of whose strength he had met, would be moving rapidly forward to arrest or avenge the disasters, which the imprudence of his advance seemed likely to bring on. He therefore withdrew with his captives and booty to Malden. On the

other hand, General Harrison, weakened by the destruction of his advance corps, and knowing that the ice made an easy communication along the lake shore with the Maumee, had ground for distrusting his ability to defend a position which had been but imperfectly established, against an enemy flushed with success, and whose enterprise bespoke much confidence in his own strength. Events proved this abandonment unnecessary, at least, at that time, though it is not certain that, had the Maumee continued to be occupied, the attack, made the following season, would not have been made that winter. It was undoubtedly better to sacrifice the stores which had been collected there, difficult and expensive as had been their collection, than to expose raw troops to the chances of a second disaster. The reoccupation of the same ground the February following repaired the fault, if one had been committed.

The operations in this quarter the spring ensuing were full of interest and consequences. The investment of Fort Meigs by General Proctor was begun with spirit, little answering its impotent conclusion. One of the incidents accompanying this investment is conspicuous for the instruction it affords. The attack directed to be made by Colonel Dudley's regiment on the left bank of the river was well devised, and promised the happiest results, though converted into a deplorable reverse by the blindfold impetuosity of those who conducted it. The "Notices" dwell on this subordinate disaster with a just desire to exhibit, in the strongest light, the destructive consequences of disobedience to orders in military affairs. An officer who assumes the responsibility of departing from orders, when he is performing only a part in some plan of attack or defence, becomes at once as disqualified for his position as a horse for the race, when it has burst all restraints of the bridle. Colonel Dudley's part was nearly consummated when he surprised the enemy's batteries, which he could have rendered useless, and then effected a secure retreat. Remaining on the ground, from a mistaken and arrogant idea that an initial success insures a continued triumph, he dallied and skirmished, until, being surrounded, he lost all he had gained, and nearly the whole of his detachment also. This recklessness and folly on one bank did not frustrate the plan of attack on the other. General Proctor was sufficiently discouraged by these evidences of strength and enterprise in his antagonist, to determine on an abandon-

ment of his objects in that quarter ; first, however, trying the effect of a summons to surrender, under cover of which he effected his retreat without molestation.

The habit of summoning places to surrender, so often resorted to by the British in this war, is severely condemned by the author of the "Notices," particularly when, no attempt being made at a subsequent enforcement, the summons wears the aspect of an empty bravado. When General Hull proclaimed to the inhabitants of Canada that he could "look down all opposition," it behoved him to look well to his after movements, and especially to see that he succumbed to no appearances, but only to the stern reality of superior power. But General Brock, who had discerned the weak points of his enemy, which lay rather in his *morale* than his *physique*, believed that a trumpet would shake down the walls before him as effectually as his cannon. In this he was not mistaken. General Proctor may have borne this in mind, as well as the surrender to a summons of Mackinaw, where a threat of the tomahawk overcame all resistance. Or, what is more probable, after the proofs he had seen of the firmness of his adversary, he may have intended only to raise a smoke to cover his meditated retreat. We are warranted to conclude, from the use he made of this attempt at a parley, that he anticipated no other benefits from it. It was a successful stratagem, and as such, creditable to his tact in war.

We have permitted ourselves to dwell so long on the scenes of the northwestern frontier, — scenes which, though they minister nothing to our pride, are profitable to dwell upon, — that we have little room for turning back upon the operations of General Van Rensselaer and General Smythe, which are fruitful themes of animadversion to the author of the "Notices." And well may he hold them up to unsparing condemnation. The amiable and excellent patriot who conducted, or rather permitted, the attack on Queenstown, showed his willingness to peril fortune and reputation in endeavours, the bearing and issue of which were, no doubt, entirely beyond his comprehension. Though free to set an example, that might help to fill up the ranks of the *Levies*, then so earnestly called for by the government, and thus become a general *malgré lui*, yet he probably had little share in planning the attempt on Canada, which has given his name such an undesired and inappropriate celebrity. The "Notices" fully expose the character of this

affair ; its want of proper object ; its deficiency of available means to compass it, shadowy as it was ; the extreme confusion and insubordination that marked its progress ; but also acknowledge the instances of gallantry and good conduct displayed by a few regulars, who succeeded, with still fewer equally gallant volunteers, in taking the enemy's batteries ; only, however, to be unnecessarily abandoned to captivity. Queenstown is a name that should not be forgotten, though remembered with mortification. It suggests a lesson of instruction which may not arise from the most glorious battle-fields.

The campaign of 1813 most naturally awakens the author of the " *Notices*" to a new interest in his work. *Quorum pars fuit.* The active agency which the Secretary of War had in planning the operations of the war during that year are well recollected ; nor has it been forgotten, that his ardent zeal, overstepping ordinary limits, gave to an office before supposed to have only a local habitation, an ambulatory character, which detached the War Department for a time from the Cabinet, and fixed it in the tented field.

The plans of this campaign were undoubtedly highly creditable to the sagacity and military acumen of the mind which originated them. They looked to attainable objects, which were likely to be beneficial when attained, and proposed ample means for their attainment. We now refer more particularly to the campaign on Lake Ontario. Though the Secretary of War laid down the plan of operations at Washington, yet he most properly left some discretion to the General in command, who thought proper to depart in a degree from the order of movements prescribed. Whether this was injudicious in the beginning, and unlucky in the end, is the question to be answered. The " *Notices*" endeavour to prove the affirmative, and with an earnestness that bespeaks something like an apprehension that any other answer would recoil upon the War Department. We do not, however, see that in this case, *judex damnatur*, if the General were acquitted.

It is probably a false view of the subject, to suppose that praise or blame ensues according to the success with which the plan was executed. The views entertained at Washington were doubtless correct, according to appearances presenting themselves there. To the general commanding on the spot other views might present themselves. Kingston, York, and Fort George, was unquestionably the natural series, looking only to the effect of crippling the enemy most effectually in detail. The

fall of the lower places almost insured the fall of those above. One blow on the trunk of a tree goes further towards its destruction than many on its branches. All, however, that is expedient, is not practicable. Kingston was at that time defended by a fleet as well as by land forces. That fleet was nearly equal to our own. Commodore Chauncy might have considered the disparity in his favor more than made up, — as it no doubt was, — by the batteries then ready to coöperate with his antagonist. There were many reasons which justified a departure from the original plan. Something like the main body of the forces with which General Dearborn was to operate was upon the Niagara frontier. It may be asked, why they were not all concentrated upon Sackett's Harbour. Had such been the case at the opening of the campaign, these forces must have been dependent for all their movements on the fleet, — a very inadequate transportation.

General Dearborn, no doubt, regarded his land force at Sackett's Harbour as sufficient for the capture of York (Toronto), and knew that the fleet could easily transport it. Proposing only the reduction of that comparatively small place, the capture of its public stores, (said to be considerable, including a vessel on the stocks,) and also, if possible, its garrison, Fort George was his next object. Being of much greater importance, having a strong fort and a large garrison, the force to be brought against it must be augmented in proportion. This augmentation he would find at Niagara. In the mean time, it was expected that Sir James Yeo would be out, and met on the broad lake. A victory over him there would deprive Kingston of half its defence, and render its reduction comparatively easy and certain.

These were probably among the prevailing motives, which induced the general commanding to change the order of attack in some degree. Pursuing the order prescribed at Washington, he might have failed, — indeed, with only the force he had at Sackett's Harbour, no doubt he would have failed, — in the beginning; a failure that would have cost him the campaign. The change insured success in the first step; made the second nearly as certain; and multiplied the chances in favor of the third. Thus far, therefore, we think General Dearborn exercised a sound discretion. Whether the execution of the plan thus changed was as prompt and energetic as it might have been, and ought to have been, is another ques-

tion, but which is best answered by following the order of events as they arise.

It was evident, Fort George being threatened as well as Kingston, that the enemy must hold the garrisons of those two places, and of York also, immovable, until some decisive demonstration should show the object of immediate attack. Co-operation would then, of course, be too late. Each post must stand on its own resources. The embarkation was made as soon as the navigation opened in the spring, but with no published designation of its object, unless Kingston, by way of feint, were given out as that which was in view. York was carried without difficulty, and the loss sustained was owing principally to the explosion that took place after the landing had been fully made. We hope we misunderstand the "Notices," when they seem to imply that the Commander-in-chief should have been with the landing party. The force was no more than a Brigadier-general's command, and was specially put under the immediate charge of an officer of that rank, who was peculiarly competent for the station. General Dearborn was on board merely as a passenger, on his way to Niagara.

The death of General Pike may have diminished the amount of success that crowned the day. He was brave and enterprising, and eager for distinction, having the unbounded confidence of his command. The pursuit, had he survived the explosion, would probably have been made with more spirit, but no better success, as he, no doubt, would also have listened to the overtures for a surrender, and, like his successor, have been beguiled out of valuable time. Had either of them, however, taken the unusual step of promptly rejecting them, and passed on to capture and destroy, (as many, under the exasperation naturally excited by a supposition that the explosion had been the result of design, felt inclined to do,) it is not at all probable that General Sheaffe, or his party, would have been overtaken, furnished, as no doubt they were, with all the facilities of a rapid movement which the place afforded, and which would have been wholly wanting to the pursuers. All was probably acquired, which any circumstances would have permitted. The vessel, which could not have been launched, would of course have been burnt by us, had it not been set on fire by the enemy. According to the plan of the campaign, no further delay was made at York than was necessary to withdraw such public stores found there as could be moved.

A prompt reëmbarkation then took place, and the fleet sailed for the neighbourhood of Niagara.

The "Notices" animadvert somewhat lightly on the delay that postponed the next step, which should have been taken with all possible rapidity, consistent with due preparation. Such preparation was certainly not complete when the brigade came over from York. Many boats had to be collected or constructed, as the proposed transit was to be made in such craft. But this was done before many days had elapsed, when a bombardment of Fort George from Fort Niagara, serving the double purpose of injuring the enemy's works and of covering the descent of many boats which were up the river Niagara, seemed to finish all preliminaries. But the fleet, after landing the York brigade, had sailed for Sackett's Harbour, and its return was regarded as indispensable to the coming attack.

Commodore Chauncey most naturally feared for the safety of the vessels he had on the stocks at Sackett's Harbour, and hurried back for their protection. When he sailed thence again, had he left all the troops there which he found there, that protection would not have been diminished by his visit ; but, bringing away Colonel Macomb's regiment as he did, (of course, it is presumed, at the request of General Dearborn,) he left his ship-yard and naval stores much more weakly guarded than he found them. Hence, had the fleet remained at anchor off Niagara, instead of going to Sackett's Harbour, the crossing at Fort George would no doubt have been made a week or two sooner, and the latter place would have been much less perilled, than it actually was, in the attack by Sir George Prevost, which followed soon after his departure. We may remark further on this exposure of Sackett's Harbour, that, had the enterprise of Sir George been as successful as it might have been and should have been (for the defence of the place had been almost given up when the enemy desisted), General Dearborn would have stood convicted before the public of exposing himself to a blow behind, while looking only to his front. Indeed, he escaped the mortification of such a conviction only by an accident.

It was probably deemed important that the fleet should accompany the troops at their crossing. Its presence was certainly an imposing accompaniment, and two of its small vessels rendered most beneficial service at the landing. They took their stations near the bank where the troops were to strike,

and soon silenced a one-gun battery there ; thus freeing them from an annoyance which might have dealt much destruction among the crowded boats.* These two vessels were therefore almost essential to the expedition. More than they might have been dispensed with, excepting for the purpose of holding the reserve, — Colonel Macomb's regiment, — more at hand, as well as giving the Commander-in-chief a distant view of the landing. Whether such a detachment from the fleet might not have been left behind, and thus avoided considerable delay, is a question that has often been asked.

Fort George was finally taken on the 27th of May, about a month after the capture of York. The plan of the campaign intended that but a few days should have intervened. The "Notices," in remarking upon this attack, point out several errors in the arrangement of the troops. It is not the first time that leaving open the Queenstown road has been instanced as one. Attention was undoubtedly turned to this side of the enemy. But to have made it the main point of crossing, was forbidden by many considerations. In the first place, the boats, necessary to the transit, could not have been properly concealed or protected on the river within convenient distance. In the next place, to have shut up that avenue for his retreat, would have still left open to the enemy the road by the lake and shore, by far the most desirable for a rapid junction with the country below. There was not force enough to admit of closing up effectually both these avenues. And a division, under such circumstances, would have been against all rules of warfare and prudence.

Operating upon the lake-shore presented many advantages. The boats were all at hand, ready to receive the troops, without any molestation, the point of departure being some three or four miles east of the mouth of the Niagara river. Landing, moreover, on the lake-shore of the enemy, closed up the avenue of retreat along the lake, and threw him, whenever he chose to fall back, on the Queenstown route, which retarded his retreat towards the head of the lake a day or more, — an important gain of time to us, had we wisely improved it.

* As the troops were approaching the shore during this operation of the two vessels, a small boat was seen passing to and fro between them, in much contempt of the shots that this one gun threw into the lake until it was silenced. This little wherry had Lieutenant Perry on board, who then gave an earnest of the daring which, before the season closed, lighted up another lake with a blaze of glory.

The capture of the garrison, therefore, was out of the question, unless the British had come to the improbable determination of maintaining the fort. The pursuit was not taken up with the spirit, after the enemy fell back from the lakeshore, which might have been expected. His cannon opened from the village of Newark as if he had determined to make defence there. It appeared afterwards that this battery was intended only to cover his evacuation of the fort above. As soon as it was silenced or withdrawn, the pursuit was directed by the senior general on the ground. The remark of the "Notices," that it was made without orders, may apply to the advance, but not to the brigades which followed.

Thus far, then, the plan of the campaign would seem to have been followed up with spirit, as well as with satisfactory success. Here, however, that spirit, and, of course, that success, ended. From the first day of the occupation of British ground a series of movements began, which showed little regard for that plan, and still less for the rules of warfare. When the pursuit of the enemy, after the evacuation of Fort George, was resolved upon, there was clearly but one course which held out encouragement of success. Any pursuit that proposed, like that taken up on the day of the evacuation, merely a rear-chase, was not of this character. The enemy fled through weakness, and would continue to fly as long as his relative strength remained the same, with the advantage of many hours' start, and of all such facilities as bridges, unobstructed roads, &c., which he would take good care should not remain in his rear for the benefit of his pursuers. Had there been no alternative, however, even such a hopeless chase might have been undertaken as a *pis aller*. But the choice was without any such restrictions. The retreat having been made on the Queenstown route, the lake road was open, which intersected the other route at about twelve miles' distance, giving our troops the advantage of some eight or ten miles. Under such circumstances there was no time to be lost. A waste of even a few hours might be fatal. It is true, the troops were fatigued with the labors and exhaustion of the day. Those actually engaged had had no relaxation from the dawn to the time when the evacuation took place, about noon. But there was the reserve, — a strong regiment, entirely fresh, — the third brigade nearly so, and the second brigade not much diminished in vigor, as the contest at the landing had been maintained

by the advance and first brigade; the enemy retreating from the shore as the others were successively hurrying towards it. Out of these a corps could have been formed, which might safely have placed itself at the intersection referred to, with every chance of another favorable conflict with the enemy, who would there have found himself deprived of most of the facilities of a retreat.

We need scarcely add that no such pursuit as is here spoken of was undertaken in time. The next day was too late, and every subsequent movement was a new step of divergence from the plan of the campaign, taken with little promise of any compensatory benefit. The moment that it was ascertained that the enemy could not be intercepted in his retreat around the lake, then the plan of the campaign should have been returned to with promptitude and spirit. This plan called for an immediate demolition of Fort George, a corresponding strengthening of Fort Niagara, and a rapid movement down the lake with all the troops, save a strong garrison for that fort, and a corps of observation at Lewistown, to be augmented by militia, in case the enemy reoccupied Fort Erie and the strait below. The fleet was there, boats were there, and the season most propitious. Kingston was the next object. Sir James Yeo was out, but had declined an encounter with Commodore Chauncey, who could have conducted our flotilla down the shore, still in readiness to renew the challenge he had so gallantly given to his antagonist. The flotilla, in case of its acceptance, could easily have found refuge along that shore. Whether Kingston could have been taken or not, is not the question. Many things might have frustrated the best concerted plan. But nothing called for further attention up the lake,—not regarding a wild goose-chase after General Vincent as a proper object. All worthy objects were below, and thither all concentration should have been made. Had the army, collected at Sackett's Harbour, made an attempt to cross over to Kingston, Sir James must have fought, or yielded the prize. In case of his discomfiture, all on Lake Ontario fell, as a matter of course. The reverse might only have changed the objects of the campaign. Independent of the fleet, the army could have operated on Montreal; the ultimate and main object of the campaign.

It is easy to detect faults after time and events have made them manifest. There was much to lead astray at the surren-

der of Fort George. Each day offered something new to justify, it was thought, a departure from the plan that was followed at York. — We have made the foregoing remarks upon what we now believe to have been mistaken steps, with no wish to question the zeal, or even the generalship, of the veteran officer who then directed, mostly from a sick-bed, or an invalid's chair, the operations in that quarter. Withdrawing him from the command, just at the moment when reviving health was about to enable him to renew active operations, without substituting any chief in command who knew the general plan of operations, paralyzed the rest of the campaign, which lingered on in idleness, until autumnal storms defeated all attempts to recover lost ground.

The "Notices" give a fair summary of the events of this autumnal campaign, which the angry elements, but more the angry bickerings of generals, brought to a close, that disappointed, disheartened, not to say disgusted the public. The presence of the "War Department" itself, which, as we before remarked, was at this time hovering on the frontiers, like the hub of a wheel crowded towards the periphery, could not harmonize discordant minds, which seemed to regard public interests as subordinate to private animosities. Circumstances may not have presented much choice, though there was the veteran of whom we have just spoken, who might have been replaced, at any time during the season, with probable advantage, at his post, — and it may have been hoped that feuds, which had been so warm at the South, would cool under the lower temperature of the North. But it was found, unfortunately for the country, that the generals changed *cælum, non animum*, when they exchanged Louisiana for the Canada frontier.

We gladly turn back from these scenes, where gallantry in several conflicts, and patient endurance of much suffering, were unavailing both to the army and the country, to the events in the far west, where, earlier in the season, both the water and the land had been illumined with an unexpected brilliancy of success. Perry's victory had been complete, and annihilated his antagonist. Not a vestige of opposition floated on Lake Erie, and General Harrison crossed over his army to the vicinity of Malden, with no more fear of molestation than if it had been a season of profound peace.

The pursuit which trod on the heels of General Proctor

was a legitimate operation of war. No other object solicited or claimed attention in that quarter, excepting the retreating British. This pursuit might fail of overtaking the enemy, but every rood of ground passed over, whether an enemy were captured or not, was a positive loss on one side, and a beneficial gain to the other. In occupying Michigan, it was all important to find the Indians convinced that their ally was fast receding from them. Under these circumstances, the pursuit, divested of all incumbrances, was made hot with vigor and haste, being joined opposite Detroit by Colonel Johnson's mounted rangers, which enabled General Harrison to continue it with some hope of success. Before this junction, he was without any hope.*

The victory at the Moravian towns was a counterpart of Perry's victory. It swept the land of all opposition in that quarter. Much controversy has agitated portions of the public relative to this action. The names of illustrious individuals have been alternately thrown in, like the sword of Brennus, to incline the scale. Posterity will inquire little into these minor disputes, arising from feelings with which the public at large has no sympathy. The names of Perry and Harrison are indissolubly connected with kindred victories. All attempts at divorcing them are as ungrateful as they will be vain.

The "Notices" do not pretend to embrace a view of the achievements of our Navy, or its operations, except so far as they were connected with the operations on land. This is truly giving "only half the battle." But, as a military man, the author intended to keep within the bounds of professional familiarity, knowing that he was at home on land, while he might not have proved so on the deep. There were operations upon the coast, however, which, having been the result of certain acts of the army on the northern frontier, most properly engaged his attention. One of the acts alluded to, is the burning of Newark, in 1813, by Brigadier-General McClure, of the New York Militia. This destruction of a small vil-

* We should regret to suppose that the author of the "Notices" intended that his account of this pursuit should leave an impression on the reader's mind, that General Harrison's "desponding view" of its unpromising prospects well nigh prevented its being undertaken. We are sure that the extract from his letter to the Secretary of War, showing his determination to undertake it, even when hoping against hope, quoted by the "Notices," should have shielded him from even a shadow of suspicion of this kind.

lage, without justifiable cause, gave portions of the subsequent war a new and revolting character. Strictly military objects were no longer regarded as alone within its scope. Private property, and defenceless communities, suffered, as in the days of brigandism.

Buffalo had been burnt by the British early in the contest. But General McClure did not shelter his act under the plea of retaliation. It was "merely to deprive the enemy of winter quarters" that he laid Newark in ashes, and gave the enemy a pretext for resorting to that obdurate and extreme plea, and balancing the account with retribution seven-fold, if not seventy times seven. During the occupation of Fort George the preceding season, Newark had been nearly abandoned by its inhabitants. Such an occupation, while it left dwellings &c. untouched, unavoidably interrupted all business and ordinary avocations, and trenched much upon the comforts of families. The severe requisitions of war had called into the field most of the men of the place, who, when it was evacuated in May, were borne off by the retreating force. The families mostly, sooner or later, followed, and remained away during the campaign. These circumstances, while they did not furnish any justification for the act of General McClure, much diminished the amount of misery that such an act generally brings on a community. Indeed, it is probable that, when he applied the torch to Newark, few of the former occupants of the houses had returned, and that the flames preyed for the most part upon a deserted village. Far otherwise was it with the villages and towns on which the British Admiral avenged its wrongs. It found them all full of families, anticipating no invasion of their comforts, and left them plundered, often in ashes, and occasionally marked with the blood of unresisting, or only feebly resisting, victims. These events are justly held up for the reprobation of posterity, and names, however high, should not be suffered to shake off the infamy that belongs to them. General McClure undoubtedly acted under a mistaken sense of duty, or an ignorance of the customs of war. But mistakes, that involve such serious consequences to whole communities, are to be held up as the solemn warnings of history.

The British Admiral began his career of depredation and conflagration with the sword of justice in his hand. But it soon became merely the sword of vengeance. Justice was

amply satisfied before he sacked even one of the many towns that fell beneath his fury. If he acted under instructions, which required him to exact this enormous retribution, he stands, like the executioner, apart from mankind, with the taint of blood upon him. The author of the "Notices," with his strong and indignant language, stamps these deeds and these characters with ineffaceable reprobation. War has its horrors, which no lofty courtesy, no generous chivalry, can wholly, or even in any important degree, abate; but he who, either through rash ignorance, or as the willing instrument of exasperated power, aggravates them, must expect the severest condemnation of history.

The campaign of 1814 on the Niagara frontier is described in much detail in the "Notices." The author's feelings are awakened to new enthusiasm while recording a series of actions which conferred such renown on the American arms. This campaign, as a plan, would seem to be very subordinate in character, in compass of objects, chances of success in attaining them, and beneficial results even when attained, compared with that of 1813. "To cross the river [Niagara at Black Rock], capture Fort Erie, march on Chippewa, risk a combat, menace Fort George, and, if assured of ascendancy and coöperation of the fleet, to seize and fortify Burlington," &c.,* appear to have been these objects. There is much off-hand sententiousness in the language here used, as if things were as easily done as said. The first and second parts of the plan were promptly and gallantly fulfilled. Whether the enemy anticipated such an irruption, or not, may not be known, but it would seem that he had very inadequate means of opposition, and that those means were not used with much vigilance or dexterity. The remaining parts depended more upon contingencies, and might, or might not, be fulfilled, as those contingencies were lucky or otherwise. The moment our army crossed the Niagara, a combat was undoubtedly *risked*. Any expectation of avoiding such a "risk," after having placed a wide and rapid river between it and its base of operations, must have been wholly unfounded. This portion of the direction, therefore, was mere surplusage, the redundancy of a *currente calamo* style. To "menace Fort George" was probably more easy than use-

* We had never before seen this plan of the campaign.

ful. The object of it does not appear, as having been necessary to secure the ultimate and main object, that is, the possession of Burlington Heights. The capture of Fort George would undoubtedly have promoted that object, and might, perhaps, as well have been directed, all directions of such kind including the reservation, "*provided* it be practicable."

The possession of Burlington Heights would have cut off the retreat by land of the garrison at Fort George, (an advantage, in case that place were merely menaced,) besides giving the troops there such an advance on their way around Lake Ontario, if such a circuit were contemplated. Further benefits than these are not obvious in connexion with this main object of the campaign. Moreover, hinging the whole movement on the "ascendency and coöperation" of the fleet, when both were too problematical to be relied upon, was something like a foregone conclusion against all hope of success. Sir James Yeo had thus far showed equal skill and discretion in his tactics, knowing that to avoid being beat by his antagonist was something like a victory. Commodore Chauncey had chased him throughout the previous season from pillar to post, and had become satisfied that nothing but chance could throw a favorable opportunity in his way. He began the new season under the same auspices. His great and main object was to pursue Sir James when his strength permitted it, and watch for that tide in his affairs which was to lead on to better fortune. His next object was to keep up the energy of his shipyard. It was a game of launch, and he who built the most in the shortest time expected to win the stakes. The temporary ascendancy he might have at intervals could be of little or no benefit to the army, as it was not founded on the defeat, or even crippled state, of Sir James, who, while avoiding all encounters, was still able to interfere more or less with any coöperative measures. It was undoubtedly desirable that the fleet should lend assistance to the army, such assistance as, in 1813, had often proved highly advantageous; but the position of Commodore Chauncey necessarily made that assistance a subordinate consideration. He had a higher object, though not a "higher destiny." Nor do we think, judging by our present lights, that the fleet should have been made so indispensable to the army movements. It had a wider and more appropriate field

below ; though on this subject, suggesting such a train of reflections, we do not feel warranted to enlarge.

Fortunately for the country, this campaign is not judged by the merits of the original plan. Little is thought of it in that respect. Few look beyond the hard-fought fields where so much blood was spilt, so much bravery displayed, so much glory acquired. It is not asked how the army got there, or whether suitable or attainable objects were in view. We see only the brilliant contest beneath the full blaze of a July sun at Chippewa, when every combatant could almost look into the countenance of his opponent, and the loss and gain were easily counted up, until the balance stood in fearful odds against the enemy ; or the far more bloody, much longer doubtful, fight near the Falls, which wearied out the declining day, the twilight, the rising moon, and even startled the hour of midnight with its unintermitting din ; or the siege of Fort Erie, where perseverance, endurance, and courage repulsed assaults with the steadiness of a solid wall ; or the sortie, where skill, gallantry, energy, and combination, rose like a Phoenix from the ashes of the siege, and overwhelmed the enemy with a surprise as unexpected as triumphant. The public does not see, through this glare of honorable achievement, the "spots" that the critic may detect.

Many versions of the details of some of these actions, particularly of that of the Falls, have solicited the attention and verdict of the public. That public is concerned only in the main and acknowledged facts, — those which make the honor of the day, and elevate the national character. Whether the author of the "Notices" has succeeded in harmonizing the numerous conflicting accounts of the action, so as to have sifted out truth from error, and settled the record for future history, may not, as yet, be determined ; but it is probable that his authority will be appealed to hereafter with great respect, and perhaps as decisive of disputed points.

Following down the course of events, the "Notices" give due place to those on the northern frontier, on the sea-coast, including the irruption on Washington and Baltimore, and at New Orleans. In determining to make a decisive campaign on this side of the Atlantic in 1814, the British, having, by the submission of France, liberated large bodies of their veteran troops from European duty, resolved to transfer a sufficient force to North America, to end the contest there

as triumphantly as they had just ended the continental war. With this view some twenty thousand men were held in readiness to embark. They should have tried the effect of striking one strong blow instead of two weak ones. The force which diverged upon Canada and New Orleans might have made a deep impression at any one intermediate point. Sir Henry Clinton and General Burgoyne might, united, have made an avenue from New York to Canada; in two parts they failed. So the two armies which failed before Plattsburg and New Orleans, might, as one army, have succeeded, temporarily, anywhere else.

Sir George Provost was always unlucky as an officer. His administration was active and vigilant, but his military attempts ended uniformly in discomfiture, or abandonment of their object. When, on Lake Champlain, he linked his fortunes on land to the fate of his fleet, he lost half the strength of his position. Regarding his water craft merely as auxiliaries, without depending upon it for success, he might have inflicted great injury upon the country he invaded, even after this craft ceased to sustain his flank. It is true, that, when Commodore M'Donough rode triumphant on Lake Champlain, his facility of obtaining supplies would have been much diminished. But the land was all open behind him, and the loss of his fleet deprived him of but a minor element in his operations for a short campaign. The retreat of his thousands before the mere hundreds of General Macomb, can be explained upon no military or even prudential reasons.

The irruption on Washington and Baltimore claims the especial attention of the author of the "Notices." The enemy here trenched on the very ground occupied by the Honorable Secretary himself. The War Department itself was assailed and broken up. These circumstances furnish ample motives for making up the record with circumspection. It is well known that the Secretary of War was not the military commander in that quarter. Responsibility rested on subordinate shoulders. Still, the public believed that an officer, encamped under the very eaves of the War Department, would most naturally consult with, and even receive directions, either semi-official, or ultra-official, from the incumbent of that high station; and, accordingly, the events of those days have always been referred, more or less, to the unavoidable influences arising from that juxtaposition.

Those who visited Washington in the spring of 1814, will recollect the extreme anxiety that pervaded that community on the subject of an invasion, and the common impression that that anxiety found little sympathy in the War Department, to which the "District" looked up as its *quasi* military chief, an officer of the army at that time not having been appointed to that particular charge. Many suggestions were thrown out by some of the citizens, who thought they snuffed the battle afar off. Whether any precautions thus suggested would have averted the destruction that fell upon the Capitol a few months afterwards, cannot be asserted; but timely preparation seldom diminishes the chances of safety, and prevention is proverbially better than cure.

There is but one opinion as to the operations in that quarter, which is, that they were misdirected, or that the means at hand were generally misapplied. Fort Washington, the key of the principal avenue to the federal city, was confided to hands which threw that key at the enemy's feet, even before he demanded it. Such extreme incompetency should have been suspected. The fleet that came up the Potomac would never have attempted to pass that obstacle, had it stood with any show of defence. As to the main attack of the enemy, any endeavours, more than were made, to arrest the landing on the Patuxet, would probably have been unavailing. The troops which were opposed to the enemy were mostly raw militia. These could be hoped to be used to advantage only where some natural obstacles would greatly favor any stand they might make. It was, therefore, prudent to confine all operations preliminary to such a stand at such a point, to mere partisan annoyance. This point was the East River, or the branch on which Bladensburg stands. Small bodies of troops, or corps of observation, were accordingly placed here and there on the routes leading from the Patuxet to that branch, to watch the enemy's advance, and occasionally, when fitting opportunities presented, to offer resistance to his advance guards.

There were two bridges over the stream here alluded to. It seems inexplicable that one of them was not destroyed as soon as it became suspected that Washington was the object. Even if there had been an uncertainty in this respect, and it was apprehended that a junction with the fleet near Alexandria was in view, still the lower bridge should have been removed, for the reason that the security of the capital greatly

counterbalanced the preservation of a mere facility to fall on the enemy's rear, in case he should turn aside from this main object. The early destruction of the lower bridge would have necessarily confined the enemy's advance to one avenue, and all preparations to meet him would have had the same convenient limits. Leaving that bridge untouched until the last moment, and keeping there a large body of troops until it became certain that they were in a false position, was a capital error. These troops, including the gallant Barney's detachment, were hurried to their true position through the heat of mid-day, reaching it in an exhausted state, just in time to swell the tide of retreat. This error was sufficient to cause the loss of the day.*

It has often been said that the President and his Cabinet, who are known to have been on the skirts of the battle of Bladensburg, were in a false position; that their presence was an embarrassment, rather than an assistance, to the General in command. The latter may be true, and yet we do not see how, when the enemy was sounding the trumpet in their ears, they could have done otherwise than lend their countenance to a battle that was to decide the fate of the Capitol, unless they were expected, like the Roman senators at the Gaul invasion, to sit in their official chairs, until hurled out of them by the modern Gauls, or to have prudently retired even before the shadow of coming events. Mr. Monroe, the then Secretary of State, kindling up with Revolutionary fire, was actively mingling in all the movements preliminary to the battle of Bladensburg,—not, we trust, as the “Notices” would have the reader infer, to perplex and mislead them,—and he was among the combatants at that place, vainly striving to stem the ebbing fortunes of the day. His civil station permitted him thus to mingle, without any appearance of intrusion on the province of the military commander. He was where a Revolutionary soldier might be expected, under such circumstances, to be found. He was in his proper place. And so was

* The appendix gives the diary of “Colonel Allan McClure,” who appears to have mingled officially in all these movements. He gives the advice of the Secretary of War to General Winder, soon after the British had landed, which was, in substance, either to harass the enemy as he was harassed at Lexington and Concord, in 1775; or, to fall slowly back, inviting the enemy onward, and occupy the Capitol, making the main defence there. Both of these suggestions appear to have been truly military and pertinent, and we cannot but regret that one or both of them had not been adopted.

the President. He gave all the encouragement he properly could to the wavering troops, until he found that they left no alternative but flight or captivity. And we have as little doubt that the Secretary of War was at his proper post too, side by side, as he was, with the President, counselling and directing when counsel and advice were likely to be available.

That the Capitol might have proved an impregnable citadel against the enemy, exhausted as he was, and with no heavy artillery, and evidently feeling that he had ventured too far into a hostile and populous country, now hardly admits of a doubt. The author of the "Notices" states distinctly that he was in favor of making it another "Chew's house." Whether any direct suggestion to that effect was made to the President, has not, we believe, been distinctly understood. It has, however, been generally supposed, that he did not approve the measure, judging, perhaps, from the events of the day, that any such stand would be unavailing, and more probably fearing that it would only authorize the enemy to destroy the building. He was fully authorized to believe that if it were *not* so occupied, it would be permitted to stand uninjured. The laws and customs of war protected it when thus disconnected from all purposes of hostility, and the President no doubt thought that there was a guaranty in the character of a nation, professing to respect those laws and customs, against all Vandalism. But the President (if he thus opposed such a suggestion) lost both Capitol and capital, when, perhaps, he might have saved both, had he relied less on the civilized character of the British nation, which vainly boasts of having occupied, in the same quarter of a century, capital after capital in Europe, without having left any such infamous memorial behind.

The predatory occupation of Alexandria was in conformity with the burning of the Capitol and the President's house. Undefended and defenceless private property was made to ransom itself as if from piratical rapacity. The rule of war in these cases is as plain and acknowledged as any international obligation whatever. Private property at sea becomes subject to the clutches of war, but private property on land is not so. And public buildings, used for civil purposes alone, are also respected. The British had a right to raze all forts, arsenals, store-houses containing munitions of any kind, to the ground; but the Capitol, the President's house,

and the flour and tobacco of Alexandria, were as much exempt from destruction or depredation, as would be the Parliament house, St. James's palace, or the silver spoons of any family, if, by any freak of fortune, the United States were to occupy London in a hostile way.

Perhaps it may be thought that remarks of this kind, which are likely to revive slumbering passions, or exasperate those still awake, notwithstanding the lapse of more than a quarter of a century, were better omitted than made. But we should contemplate history to little advantage, if we dwelt only on its agreeable aspect. The example of such men as McClure, Ross, and Cockburn, should be held up conspicuously, as a warning both to nations and individuals. General Ross at the battle of Bladensburg, where his gallantry and soldiership honorably won the day, is as much respected by Americans as by Britons; but the moment he applied the torch to the civil public edifices at Washington, he enrolled himself in that class of historical personages, at the head of which stands the Ephesian incendiary.

The closing scene of the war of 1812, namely, the defence of New Orleans, occupies its proper place in the "Notices." High credit is given for the boldness, resource, and constancy with which that defence was made, while the military errors committed on both sides are examined with acumen and fairness. These volumes will hereafter be consulted by the soldier, who is gathering up lessons in the art of war. The critical remarks of the distinguished author will throw much light on this subject. We have no space to follow him through his account of the memorable "8th of January." It has a celebrity that will always endure, and which will carry down to the latest posterity the great name indissolubly connected with it.

This nation is often in circumstances which must lead her to regard war as an event which may visit her again and again; it is, therefore, useful for her to consider the past with a view to benefit for the future. The war of 1812 should be the subject of reflection in the mind of every statesman, who may have the responsibility of meeting a like emergency. If this war deserve to be a guide in the management it exhibited, its details cannot be too much studied. On the contrary, if that management were faulty, still the instruction is the same. There is now probably little doubt

in the mind of any person who has examined the subject, that the initial operations of the war, so far as they related to the land, were nearly or quite all wrong ; and were likely to lead, as they mostly did lead, only to disaster and disgrace. We were not prepared for offensive operations on the frontiers, and therefore should not have undertaken them until suitable preparations were made. Nothing would have been lost by the delay. The frontiers could have been protected, and the troops improved by discipline. The conquest of Canada was not a legitimate object of the war, even if it had been attainable. No desire had been evinced by the Provinces to join us, and we, as a nation, had no desire to receive them ; 1775 and '76 were not forgotten. Impressions made here and there, according to the plan of the campaigns of 1812, could have produced no beneficial results, even if they had proved successful. They were like attempts to breach a wall by random shots, no two of which strike in the same place. The defence of the Northwestern frontier against Indian aggressions, much to be apprehended in that quarter, was a paramount obligation. General Hull's movement, therefore, so far as it related to Michigan, was expedient and necessary, and might have completely fulfilled its object, had it been preceded by common forecast, and executed with common prudence. Two things, which did not depend on him, were omitted, — omissions that almost necessarily sent misfortune before him, and brought up his rear with defeat. We have already sufficiently remarked on these omissions. Too much heed cannot be given to these instructive warnings.

Whether these volumes, which are full of such warnings, will have the beneficial influence they deserve, is a matter of painful doubt. We have instances every few years of a willingness on the part of those who are in the councils of the nation to rush blindly into war, with scarcely a question as to our preparation for such an event. This want of forecast may be excusable in Congress, a body of many minds, among which concurrence of opinion, especially in prudential matters, is not to be anticipated. But the Executive has power to act, so far as its province extends, either with caution or with energy, as the emergency may demand. The means placed at its disposal may be limited, but they can be well applied. There is no teaching for Congress.

A change comes over it too often for the influence of experience. But those who administer the government should consult history, and benefit by its admonitions. In these times, when we are daily startled with apprehensions that hostilities are almost inevitable, they may ponder on these volumes with great advantage.

The appendix to this work has much valuable matter, and much that is a mere incumbrance to the volumes. Facts which are not suited to the text from their diffuseness or technical dryness, very properly fall into an appendix, provided they are essential or desirable illustrations of it. Such, however, as have only a temporary interest, or are *ex parte* in their character, tending rather to mislead than to rectify the judgment, do not deserve such an honorable place. There are long documents of the latter character introduced into this appendix, which had better have been left to that oblivion from which this republication has probably rescued them. The helter-skelter affair of Queenstown occupies its full quota of pages in the body of the work, and there is no warrant, either in fairness or expediency, in permitting a single witness, — a most worthy officer, it is true, — to occupy the stand such an inordinate length of time in the appendix, excluding many others who might as justly claim the same privilege. Still less can we see any sufficient excuse in a mere willingness to befriend the memory of a deceased officer, for allowing the Beaver dam mishap, — according to its magnitude, by far the most discreditable event of the war, and very properly dismissed with a few paragraphs in the text, — to dilate in the Appendix beyond almost any other action in the work.

We cannot part with the "Notices" without finding some fault with the exterior. No matter what time may elapse between the publication of two volumes of the same work, they should be so germane to each other as at least to be recognised as of the same family. The last volume is undoubtedly an improvement on the first, which is almost shamed out of countenance by the better dress and fairer countenance of its younger sister. We do not find fault with the change that has taken place in the title-page, giving the author, in the last volume, the full benefit of the honorable rank and position which belong to him, while, in the first, his name stood divested of all blazonry of this kind. The

work should have the full benefit of all adventitious circumstances of this sort, and it is a pity that it did not begin, in this respect, as it has left off. It was at once obvious, however, to military men, that there was an error in the rank assumed; and, while the list of "Errata" undertakes to correct it, the true grade should have been given, instead of one which has never but once been known in our service. Certainly the fact that the author had been promoted, as it were, from the grade of Brigadier-General to the War Department, was too creditable to be shaded off in the slightest degree.

It is also to be hoped that in any new edition, the distinguished author will expunge all instances of irony, and affectations of contempt, which too often disfigure his highly wrought pages. The terms "*Mr. Wilkinson*," and "*Mr. Harrison*," do not express the meaning to be conveyed, unless more is meant than meets the eye. Since the days of Smollet, who speaks of "*Mr. Wolfe*" and the like, from an English habit which no American author will acknowledge, military men are ever designated by the titles that bespeak their rank. Omitting such, not merely courtesy, but necessary illustration of rank and position, either through an affected lapse of the pen, or from disrespectful or contemptuous feelings, is beneath the dignity of history, and also of the historian.

ART. X.—CRITICAL NOTICES.

1. — GODFREY WEBER'S *General Music Teacher*; adapted to *Self-Instruction, both for Teachers and Learners; embracing also an Extensive Dictionary of Musical Terms*. Translated from the third German Edition, with Notes and Additions. By JAMES F. WARNER. Boston: J. Wilkins & R. B. Carter. 8vo. pp. 135, lxxxviii.

THIS is a very excellent, old-fashioned, thorough, exact, dry work, on the elements of music, being the first part of an extended treatise, and containing all that is necessary, and much that is superfluous, for an understanding of the first principles of the art, and a knowledge of the names of its most simple tools and instruments. It is written in such an unattractive, formal, and pedantic style, that we cannot but wonder a little